

**Town of Newfields
First Session of the 2014 Annual Meeting
Deliberative Session February 4, 2014**

Board of Selectmen: Michael Woodworth, Chairman, James Thompson III and David Edgerly.

John Hayden, Moderator

Sue E. McKinnon, Town Clerk

Moderator John Hayden called the meeting to order at 7pm. He called for a pledge of allegiance and reviewed the rules of the meeting.

Ella Walichnowska asked the Moderators permission to have someone speak for her regarding Article #11. A vote was taken and all were in favor of allowing a non-resident to speak on Article 11.

Article 1. Shall the Town of Newfields raise and appropriate as an operating budget, not including appropriations by special warrant articles and other appropriations voted separately, the amounts set forth on the budget posted with the Warrant or as amended by vote of the first session, for the purposes set forth therein, totaling One Million, Three Hundred Fifty Eight, Nine Hundred Eighty Six dollars (\$1,358,986)? Should this article be defeated, the default operating budget shall be One Million, Three Hundred Thirty Thousand, Seven Hundred Eleven dollars (\$1,330,711) which is the same as last year, with certain adjustments required by previous action of the Town of Newfields or by law or the governing body may hold one special meeting, in accordance with RSA 49:13, X and XVI, to take up the issue of a revised operating budget only. (Selectmen recommend the (\$1,358,986 as set forth on said budget)

Chairman Mike Woodworth explained that the operating budget is up \$30,000 over last year. All employees were given a 2% raise and Selectmen's salaries of \$6,000 were added back into the budget.

Jamie Thompson explained that this year direct costs related to employees health and dental benefits, New Hampshire Retirement, social security and Medicare have been re-allocated to the various departments.

Mike Todd Chairman of the Planning Board made a motion to increase the operating budget by \$2,500 for the purpose of allowing the planning board to take advantage of matching grants for stormwater infrastructure mapping. Mike Price seconded the motion to increase the operating budget to \$1,361,486. All were in favor and the motion carried.

Bob Conner asked if the Selectmen had any intention of offsetting the budget somewhere else by \$2,500 to make up for the increase for the Planning Board. Mike Woodworth replied the increase will be absorbed and will not be cut from another line item.

John Hayden added that had the Planning Board known about the available matching grants they would have added the money to the budget beforehand.

Mike Sununu asked about the increase in the actual highway budget for 2013 and wanted to know

if it was due to an increase in snow removal. Mike Woodworth said the highway block grant revenue is not included in the operating budget of the highway and that is why it looks like highway expenses were more in 2013.

Bill Podszus asked for the Selectmen to comment on the money being saved due to recycling. Jamie said that the rates of solid waste have gone up but the town is creating less waste, recycling more and it is costing the town less money.

Ed Scanlon asked for an explanation of the insurance line.

Jamie stated that health and dental insurance has been re-allocated to the different departments and the only items in the insurance line are property liability, unemployment compensation and workman's compensation.

Article 1 shall be placed on the ballot as amended.

Article 2. Shall the Town vote to raise and appropriate the sum of twenty thousand dollars (\$20,000) to be placed in the previously established Road Maintenance Expendable Trust Fund for the purpose of repairing and maintaining town roads? (Recommended by the Selectmen)

Road Agent Brian Knipstein said that this is the third year that funds have been set aside for road repairs. The cost of paving has doubled in the last 10 years and this fund has been a great way to offset paving expenses. Last year a portion of Old Lee Road was paved and this year Halls Mill Road will be paved. The plan is to pave one mile of road per year and stay on schedule.

There was no discussion and Article 2 shall be placed on the ballot as written.

Article 3. Shall the town vote to authorize the selectmen to enter into a long-term lease/purchase agreement in the amount of one hundred thirty three thousand, three hundred thirty two dollars (\$133,332) payable over a term of sixty (60) months for twenty (20) Scott Air-Pak's for the Fire Department and to withdraw forty thousand dollars (\$40,000) from the previously established Fire Department Equipment Expendable Trust fund for a deposit and to raise and appropriate twenty one thousand dollars (\$21,000) for the first year's payment. The following year's payments will be contained in the operating budget of the fire department. The lease agreement will contain an escape clause. (Recommended by the Selectmen)

Dave Edgerly explained that this article allows the town to enter into a lease agreement rather than purchasing 20 air packs at one time. The escape clause allows the town to get out of the lease should the town not raise the money but it also means the air packs would be returned.

Jeff Buxton said that for the past 2 years we have set aside a total of \$40,000 for air packs which will be used for a down payment on the lease. The current air packs that the fire department has are good for one more year. Refurbishing them would cost \$3,600-\$4,400 each. Last year the fire department spent \$2,500-\$3,000 on repairing their air packs. The life expectancy of an air pack is 15 years. Jeff got prices on air packs and Scot came back with a reasonable lease purchase agreement. It is important to purchase all the same air packs for safety reasons. For fire fighters, air packs are their lifeline and they need to be able to use them blind. Having the same brand for all fire fighters is essential when it comes to training. The cost is about \$6,000 each.

The maintenance cost is not included in the lease and the air packs will be owned by the town at the end of the five year lease.

Article 3 shall be placed on the ballot as written.

Article 4. Shall the Town vote to raise and appropriate the sum of thirty thousand dollars (\$30,000) to be placed in the Fire Truck Capital Reserve Fund previously established, for the purpose of the future acquisition of a new fire truck? The Selectmen were previously named as agents to expend from the fund. (Recommended by the Selectmen)

Dave Edgerly stated that this is the 3rd year of putting money away for a new fire truck. Fire Chief Jeff Buxton said that there is no plan for at least the next 5 years to replace a fire truck. The cost of a new fire truck in 5 years will be about \$500,000. The balance in the capital reserve will be \$90,000 if this article passes.

Article 4 shall be placed on the ballot as written.

Article 5. Shall the Town vote to raise and appropriate the sum of twenty eight thousand dollars (\$28,000) to purchase a new police cruiser for the Police Department and authorize the withdrawal of eighteen thousand dollars (\$18,000) from the Police Detail Account and ten thousand dollars (\$10,000) to be raised by taxation. (Recommended by the Selectmen)

Mike Woodworth explained that the town hopes to have \$18,000 in the detail account when it comes time to purchase the new police cruiser. Revenue received from vendors for police details is placed in the detail account for the sole purpose of purchasing police vehicles. The additional \$10,000 will be raised by taxes.

Chief Art Reed stated that the cost of a new vehicle is about \$28,000 but most of the money comes out of the detail account. The vehicle to be replaced has 95,000 miles on it.

Gayle Davis asked if the old vehicle will be traded in and Art Reed said that we will probably receive \$3,000-\$5,000 for the trade in.

Mike Sununu said that in the past we have purchased police vehicles with money set aside in the police cruiser replacement fund and questions why it is changing. Why do we want to get rid of the police cruiser replacement fund as proposed in Article 9.

Art Reed informed us that the last three vehicles were purchased with funds from the detail account. This year there isn't enough money in the detail account.

Jamie Thompson said that over the last three years the detail account has been able to provide enough money to purchase cruisers. Vehicles usually last 3 years or 30,000 miles per year. Each vehicle is replaced on a three year cycle.

Mike Sununu's concern is that the citizens no longer have control of the police cruiser purchase. A vote of the town is no longer required. The money in the detail account may be spent with approval by the Selectmen.

Article 5 shall be placed on the ballot as written.

Article 6. Shall the Town vote to raise and appropriate eighteen thousand two hundred dollars (\$18,200) for the purpose of mosquito control by town wide adulticiding (truck spraying)?
(Recommended by the Selectmen)

Mike Woodworth said that the decision to provide mosquito control with roadside truck spraying is being left up to the voters.

Rebecca Watts commented that she would like to see some scientific proof that the truck spraying is effective in killing mosquitoes.

Sarah MacGregor, owner of Dragon Mosquito addressed the audience. She stated that road side spraying does reduce the risk of EEE to residents. Road side spraying is effective in a rural area. The next level of control would be aerial spraying. The spraying is another way to knock down the mosquito population. There have been no reports of EEE in Newfields in years.

Natalie Fream questioned the safety of the spraying. It is recommended that residents close their windows and she is concerned it is harmful to her family. Sarah replied that most people close their windows because they don't want the spray drifting into their homes. Telling residents to close their windows reduces her liability and it is a safe and easy precaution to take. The CDC reports the spraying is not harmful to humans.

Kim Crisp commented that the spraying has limitations. The spray does not kill mosquitoes in backyards. Sarah replied that the spraying is not going to cover the entire acreage of the Town. It is a supplement to the larviciding done in the salt marshes and swamps.

Marla Podszus called Dragon Mosquito inquiring about the ingredients and side effects of the spray and she was not given any information. She feels the information should be posted and made available to the public.

Sarah stated that it is the universities that are doing the research on the effects of spraying; it is not Dragon Mosquito. She would rather have residents read the studies and make their own informed decision as to whether or not the spray is harmful.

Ed Scanlon commented that the spraying does no good if the surrounding towns are not spraying. Sarah replied that Epping is the only abutting town that does not spray.

Nathan Gray added that mosquitoes carry diseases that are bad for you.

Natalie Fream does not like having spraying imposed on her. Sarah said anyone may register to be placed on the "no spray" list by going to www.dragonmosquito.com.

Ralph Gray added that the road side spraying was intended to protect the children in the morning while they were waiting for the bus and at night during prime mosquito time.

A motion was made by Win Fream and seconded by Mike Sununu to change the dollar amount of the warrant article to \$0.00.

Margaret Connor stated the MSDS classifies the chemicals as a pesticide not a poison. EEE is a low lying disease but causes neurological and life long impairment to those infected.

In Bill Podszus' opinion it is a bad idea to zero out the warrant article because those here at this meeting represent only a small percentage of the voters. It would be disenfranchising the voters.

The vote on the amendment was taken and failed to pass.

Article 6 shall be placed on the ballot as written.

Article 7. Shall the Town vote to raise and appropriate thirty two thousand dollars (\$32,000) for the purpose of mosquito control by targeting mosquito larvae (known as larviciding) and Arbovirus Surveillance (known as trapping and testing of mosquitoes)? (Recommended by Selectmen)

Mike Woodworth said this is the second half of the mosquito program and we put this warrant in each year.

Mike Sununu mentioned that we have been treating mosquitoes for close to 10 years and he hasn't seen any data. He wanted to know if the Selectmen receive reports from Dragon and what do those reports say.

Mike Woodworth replied that the monthly progress reports state the services provided and the testing results.

Bob Conner questioned Mike Woodworth's comment that he didn't think the mosquito spraying was effective. Mike said the truck spraying is good for a couple of days but it does not eradicate the mosquitoes completely. We larvicide and test mosquitoes every year and there are still all the same dangers as if we did nothing. The spraying affects his kids breathing who have asthma and he doesn't know that it is 100% safe. He leaves the question up to the voters on whether or not to spray.

Jeff Buxton supports both mosquito warrant articles and agrees that there should be some data given to the town from Dragon to prove it does work.

Dave Fream commented that some of the ingredients in the spray are carcinogens. He is not questioning Sarah's due diligence. It is an emotional issue but he feels the chemicals in the spraying need to be looked at more closely.

Sarah stated that they use a bacteria to kill the mosquitoes when larviciding. She sends reams of data and the special permit to the Selectmen every year for their review. The Department of Agriculture, Public Health, Fish and Game, Department of Resources and Economic Development are all involved in the permitting process. It is a science and anyone is welcome to look through the application and read about what is being provided.

A motion was made by Barbara Clark and seconded to move the question.

Article 7 shall be placed on the ballot as written.

Article 8. Shall the Town vote to establish a contingency fund for the current year for unanticipated expenses that may arise and further to raise and appropriate ten thousand dollars (\$10,000) to go into the fund. This sum to come from fund balance and no amount to be raised

from taxation. Any appropriation left in the fund at the end of the year will lapse to the general fund. (Recommended by the Selectmen)

Jamie Thompson explained that a new law was passed last year to allow towns to create a contingency fund of up to 1% of the budget for unexpected expenses. The money comes from the unreserved fund balance and no money is raised through taxation. The Selectmen can only spend money that has been approved. The funds would only be used if there is a use for it.

Treasurer Don Doane was not in favor of the article saying it makes no sense.

Betsy Coes commented that contingency funds were once illegal. This would allow the Selectmen to spend our money on something we have no control over.

Mike Sununu added that there would be no oversight by the people over the funds. Just because the legislature passed a new law doesn't mean it is smart.

Betsy Coes said that she was under the impression that overlay was used for unexpected expenses.

Jamie Thompson mentioned that the town may have to incur significant expenses in regard to controlling nitrogen in Great Bay.

Maggie Doane asked who wrote the article. The suggested wording came from the DRA.

Mike Price stated that the expense of controlling nitrogen in Great Bay will be the expense of the Water and Sewer District not the town.

A motion was made by Win Fream and seconded by Ed Scanlon to amend the dollar amount of the article to \$0.00. The amendment was voted on and passed.

Article 8 shall be placed on the ballot as amended.

Article 9. Shall the Town vote to discontinue the Police Cruiser Replacement Fund created in 2000. The balance of the fund is currently \$0.00. (Recommended by the Selectmen)

Article 9-Mike Woodworth said that this is a housekeeping article. It is suggested by DRA to close capital reserves when they are no longer necessary. The fund can always be re-established if necessary. The balance of the fund was used last year for the purchase of a police cruiser.

Mike Sununu commented that the people of the town will no longer have control over the purchase of a police cruiser because the Selectmen are authorized to spend the money. There will be no vote from the town.

The police detail account was established for the sole purpose of purchasing police vehicles. Dave Edgerly explained that the money invoiced for details that Newfields Police provide is placed in the police detail account. The police replacement fund has always been separate from the detail account.

Betsy Coes added that the police detail account is obviously not a dependable source of income.

There is the possibility that taxes may need to be raised to supplement the detail account as is proposed in warrant article #5 this year.

Article 9 shall be placed on the ballot as written.

Article 10. By Citizen's Petition, to see if the Town of Newfields will vote to raise and appropriate a sum not to exceed \$40,000 to engage the services of a professional architect, and any other professionals as needed to produce a schematic design and preliminary cost estimate for the necessary renovations and/or additions to the Town Hall that will address at least those deficiencies of the current Police Department facilities as outlined in the reports prepared by the Police Facilities Committee entitled "Newfields Police Facilities Deficiency Document" and "Newfields PD Survey Summary," copies of which are located at the Town Hall, and to affect a code compliance audit of the Town Hall, where that audit will provide a cost estimate to bring the Town Hall up to the necessary level of compliance with the appropriate current building codes, which is anticipated to be necessary as a result of any renovations and/or additions to the Town Hall; and to address other deficiencies with the Town Hall or its use that are subsequently identified; and to authorize the Board of Selectmen to establish a Police Facilities Construction Committee consisting of at least five (5) members, all of whom are residents of the Town of Newfields, and where one (1) current Selectmen or their designee shall be a member of the Committee. The Police Facilities Construction Committee shall have the authority to make decisions, negotiate and approve all aspects of the project, including, but not limited to all acquisitions, designs and expenditures. (Recommended by the Selectmen)

Tom Grella, Chairman of the Police Facilities Committee (PFC) addressed the audience. The 8 member committee was formed by the Selectmen and charged with coming up with a petitioned warrant article to address the deficiencies of the police department. The first order of business was to choose officers and create a mission statement. James Thompson and Art Reed were appointed non-voting members of the committee. The committee met several time over the past few months. They sent out a survey to all households in Newfields and got back a 25% response. Over 60% of the responses were in favor of renovating the town hall. The petitioned warrant article is worded as such because there is an education piece in it and the committee wanted to offer specifics to the Board of Selectmen. They wanted the voters to be well educated. The documents noted in the article have been posted on the town website since mid-January.

Mike Price asked about the \$40,000 price tag. Bill Podszus explained that he received various quotes that would meet the design criteria, including a compliance audit. Any renovations done to the town hall will require bringing the building up to compliance and current codes.

Steve Coes said that he supports a new police facility. He asked about the previous vote of the town in March 2001 when we purchased the old post office for the purpose of converting it to a police station. He questions how the town can go in the current direction when there is already direction from the town vote in 2001. He feels the old post office location should be looked at as an option.

Tom Grella said the overwhelming response of the survey was to keep the police here at the town hall.

Betsy Coes commented that when the 2001 article passed we had a different police chief who was happy with renovating the old post office. In her opinion, it is a "gem" right in the middle of our town. She has nothing against MSA but she doesn't feel the highest and best use of the building

is leasing to a non-profit. It's a piece of land the town owns and anything can be engineered to fit on it.

Chief Reed said we bought the old post office but never had a vision or plan in place. The idea fell to the wayside.

Steve Coes read the 2001 warrant article and emphasized that the building was purchased for the purpose of converting it to a police station. He wanted to change the petitioned warrant article to recommend that a study include looking at the old post office. John Hayden informed him that petitioned warrant articles cannot be amended.

Bob Conner is in favor of the renovation but doesn't recall any questions on the survey regarding using the old post office.

Tom Grella stated that the committee had extensive discussions and did research. They asked the chief for input and talked about the pros and cons of the old post office. They looked at vacant property and properties for sale. Everything was taken into consideration.

Maggie Doane asked if a study was ever done to see if the old post office could accommodate a police station. She feels the will of the people is being neglected since we purchased the building with the intention of using it for a police station.

Betsy Coes said there wasn't a push to renovate the old post office because Art Reed did not like the site. Purchasing the old post office building back in 2001 for \$120,000 says a lot for the Town.

Mike Sununu understands the language of this petitioned warrant article cannot be changed. He is concerned with the high cost of the schematic design. North Hampton did a similar schematic design for a police and fire department complex for \$15,000, which included a code compliance audit.

Bill Podszus explained that the committee was charged with looking at the police facilities only not the deficiencies in the remainder of the building. A professional will need to be hired to determine those additional needs.

Win Fream applauded the committee members for their hard work. He would like to know who is determining the wants and needs of this project. Is a committee making the decisions or the people of the town? Does the committee have the discretion to spend however they want? He is more in support of a capital reserve fund.

Bill Podszus replied that the documents posted on the website contain the wants and needs.

Don Doane said that a study was done years ago to renovate the town hall and it is downstairs. Let's spend the money and get it done.

Duane Martin, PFC member, said their committee was looking ahead 20 years. They were trying to meet the needs of what had been established by the meeting when the outsourcing of the police was discussed. They wanted to make sure that the town resident's wants were taken into

consideration but to also address the deficiencies and safety of the police department. The old post office site is one acre. The facility would have to be torn down and something much more extensive built.

Joe Perna, PFC member, commented that the old post office building is now Main Street Art on the first floor, and the bottom floor is a garage with a tenant. The building is only 600 square feet. MSA has done a great job turning the building into something else.

Ralph Gray asked for clarification that this article is to create a design only. Tom Grella confirmed it is for a plan and will not exceed \$40,000.

Tom Grella added that the committee has done a lot of work. If this warrant article passes and it is not feasible to renovate the town hall, other properties will be researched. All the committees' research has been posted on the town website.

Betsy Coes said she is not undermining the work of the committee but she feels they were given the wrong direction. MSA renovated the old post office knowing they didn't own it. Leave them to their own peril. The building doesn't have to remain.

Jeff Garand, PFC member said the task given to the committee was to determine the political will of the residents of Newfields. They came up with the survey, sent it out and used the responses to formulate the warrant article. If people wanted something different perhaps they should have volunteered to be a member of the committee.

Randy Zelonis is in favor of a new police facility but would have preferred one survey per voter in his home.

Mike Sununu advised the committee and selectmen that they need the residents support in order to raise a million dollars. Several residents in this town feel their voices are not being heard. The vote will be incumbent on the people in the process. If there is no "buy in" for the project it will be a waste of our tax dollars for a theoretical exercise.

Bill Podszus said the PFC committee worked with professionals from UNH in formulating the survey. The old post office was considered and the plans to renovate the town hall were looked at and taken into account. There was an area on the survey for comments and only one person mentioned the old post office building.

Win Fream commented that the renovation will be a lot of money and not everyone in town will want to spend the money. You need to do something and know there is support for it.

Jeff Garand commented that we can't keep kicking the idea down the road repeatedly. This is a long term solution and the existing conditions are not going to get better.

Betsy added \$40,000 would go a long way to design something at the old post office site.

Tom Grella said the committee feels confident that they are acting on the will of the voters. They looked at all options.

Jeff Buxton supports a renovation or addition to the town hall. He is against doing anything at MSA. There is a significant elevation drop on the site. This article will be a good starting point to getting us a good plan.

Steve Coes mentioned that this article has a good chance of passing and he wishes there was a way for the committee to take the 40k and try to look at both the town hall and old post office.

Petitioned warrant article 10 shall be placed on the ballot as written.

Article 11. By Citizen's Petition, to request that the Town of Newfields urge:
That the New Hampshire State Legislature join nearly 500 local municipalities and 16 other states, including all other New England states, in calling upon Congress to move forward a Constitutional Amendment that 1) guarantees the right of our elected representatives and of the American people to safeguard fair elections through authority to regulate political spending, and 2) clarifies that Constitutional Rights were established for people, not artificial entities such as corporations. That the New Hampshire Congressional delegation support such a Constitutional amendment. That the New Hampshire State Legislature support such an amendment once it is approved by Congress and sent to the State for ratification. That the record of the vote approving this article shall be transmitted by written notice to Newfields' congressional delegation, and to Newfields' state legislators, and to the Governor of New Hampshire, and to the President of the United States, informing them of the instructions from their constituents by the Town Administrator's office within 30 days of the vote.

Ellen Read explained that this article is a resolution and does not affect the laws of the state. All it does is say that Newfields supports getting big money out of politics. The petition is brought forward by *Citizens United*.

The only comment was from Michael Sununu who felt we should not be using our town ballot to send political messages. In his opinion, there is no reason to have this type of material on our ballot. If individuals feel strongly about an issue they should contact their representatives.

Petitioned warrant Article 11 shall be placed on the ballot as written.

Article 12. To hear reports of agents and committees or officers heretofore chosen. There were not reports.

Article 13. To transact any other business which may legally come before the meeting. Marla Podszus asked the Selectmen to hold an educational session on the pros and cons of roadside spraying prior to the vote on March 11, 2014.

A motion was made and seconded to adjourn the meeting at 10:02pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Sue McKinnon

DRAFT

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